

Madam Speaker, if we don't pass this legislation, members of the National Guard and the Reserve, including members of Minnesota's famed Red Bulls, will stand to lose approximately 27 days of leave that they were promised. They've already earned that leave.

Let's do the right thing. This is simple. This is straightforward. We need to keep the promises out there for our service men and women.

I want to applaud Chairman KLINE. I want to applaud all the members of the Minnesota delegation for working together on something so critical and important and for sending a bipartisan message that we will stand behind our promises to our troops and our men and women in uniform.

Ms. BORDALLO. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ).

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. I thank the gentlelady from Guam who, as always, is an absolute stalwart supporter of our military forces and has a long tradition, coming from Guam, in defense of this Nation.

Also, a special thank you to Colonel KLINE, my colleague from Minnesota, for his unwavering support of our veterans and for bringing this forward and trying to correct this injustice.

You've heard it today, Madam Speaker, about a change in policy. And while a stroke of the pen at the Pentagon may not seem like that much, it impacts our veterans and their families. These are folks that have deployed, in many cases, three times. For example, the Red Bulls from Minnesota: once for 9 months, once for 22 months, and once for a year.

We came up, as a Nation, to make the determination that these folks should have a little bit of time of leave when they come back, readjust with their families, see children they maybe have never celebrated a birthday with, and then try to go back and get into the job market.

As a Nation, these are our best and brightest. These are our future leaders. We want them getting readjusted. We want them back into the job market. And by the Pentagon changing this midstream, it's not so much the financial or the monetary insult; it's the insult to what these folks went through. When they went, they were promised a benefit. When they came back, we had cut it in half.

We hear a lot about a 99 and a 1 percent. There is a 99 and a 1 percent in this country—1 percent who are serving in uniform and have served overseas, 99 percent of us who have benefited from that sacrifice.

So I commend the delegation. I commend this House. If there is an issue that binds this Nation together, it's the absolute unwavering support of those who are willing to lay down their lives and sacrifice time with their families to serve each and every one of us. The least we can do is make sure that the benefits that were promised, that

were guaranteed, are delivered upon. It's the right thing to do. It's the right thing for the country. It binds us together.

And I want to thank all of the folks here who made this possible. I urge my colleagues to support this piece of legislation.

□ 1930

Ms. BORDALLO. I thank the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. WALZ), especially for his assistance with the Reserve Component Caucus.

I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. I have no further requests for time, and I'm going to close by thanking Members on both sides of the aisle. You've heard from members of the Minnesota delegation here tonight, my good friends, the Democrats Mr. WALZ and Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. CRAVAACK, and Mr. PAULSEN. This legislation affects members of the Guard and Reserve all over the country.

I'm especially pleased that my friend and fellow committee member and fellow traveler, Ms. BORDALLO, was managing the debate on the other side of the aisle. She and I have traveled to some fairly remote corners of Iraq and Afghanistan and places like that over the years, and I must say I've never been anywhere where our Nation was at conflict and where we had men and women serving in uniform that we didn't come across somebody from the Guam National Guard. So I really want to thank her for her support on this legislation and the support of men and women in uniform everywhere. I know from the reaction I see from those soldiers that when they see Ms. BORDALLO, there is great affection and respect there—both ways.

Again, I want to thank all who weighed in on this. It was clearly an injustice. It needed to be fixed, and this is one of those times when we've come together as Democrats and Republicans working together. We have Senators, Republicans and Democrats, in the Senate working the other body to move this through. Speed counts here. Every day that this is delayed, another soldier loses the opportunity to take advantage of this paid leave.

With that, Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4045, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

APPOINTMENT AS MEMBER TO COMMISSION ON INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair announces the Speaker's appointment, pursuant to section 201(b) of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6431 note), as amended, and the order of the House of January 5, 2011, of the following member on the part of the House to the Commission on International Religious Freedom for a term ending May 14, 2014:

Mr. Elliot Abrams, Virginia

MILITARY MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS DAY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Madam Speaker, today I rise to recognize Military Mental Health Awareness Day, which is tomorrow, May 16, 2012. Our servicemembers have made tremendous sacrifices for our country, and many face serious conditions, including the potential for anxiety, depression, anger; and a growing number of those experience post-traumatic stress injury. For one reason or another, too many, tragically, result in suicide. According to the Army, during 2011, there were a total of 164 confirmed active duty suicides. For 2012, there have been 61 potential active duty suicides—35 confirmed and 26 still under investigation.

Madam Speaker, these statistics are daunting. One servicemember taking his or her own life is too many. In Congress, we have worked to increase access and availability and also to remove the stigma associated with these conditions in hopes that more soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines will be more easily diagnosed and seek the available resources and treatments.

I want to thank everyone involved in Military Mental Health Awareness Day as we continue the important work of delivering care to these brave men and women who have served this country with honor and distinction.

BULLYING PREVENTION LAW

(Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, there's nothing more precious than the Nation's children. Of course, we love and respect our seniors, respect our families, and respect our men and women in the United States military. In fact, America has a great future. But all of us realize that that future is grounded not only on our democratic principles, but on what we do for our children.

Bullying in the Nation's schools is at epidemic proportions. Two weeks ago, in my community, one young person